

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2948

To give States the flexibility to reduce bureaucracy by streamlining enrollment processes for the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs through better linkages with programs providing nutrition and related assistance to low-income families.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 16, 2005

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD (for herself, Mr. OWENS, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. WEXLER, and Ms. WOOLSEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To give States the flexibility to reduce bureaucracy by streamlining enrollment processes for the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs through better linkages with programs providing nutrition and related assistance to low-income families.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Children’s Express
5 Lane to Health Coverage Act of 2005”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Despite gains made in recent years,
4 8,900,000 children in the United States are unin-
5 sured. Of those, 6,900,000 are eligible for public
6 health insurance coverage.

7 (2) Most low-income uninsured children are en-
8 rolled in nutrition and related programs that operate
9 under income guidelines similar to those of the med-
10 icaid program. In fact, 63 percent, or 4,300,000,
11 low-income uninsured children are in families that
12 receive benefits through the food stamps program,
13 the National school lunch program, or the special
14 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants
15 and children (commonly referred to as “WIC”).

16 (3) The public would be well served if Federal
17 means-tested public programs were able to improve
18 administrative efficiency and coordination as well as
19 reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.

20 (4) Uninsured children would be well served if
21 their enrollment in a nutrition-based or other means-
22 tested program could serve as a gateway to health
23 coverage.

24 (5) Existing law already allows children to be
25 found income eligible for WIC based on their enroll-
26 ment in the medicaid program. Current law does

1 not, however, give States adequate flexibility to
2 make an income determination for eligibility for the
3 medicaid or State children’s health insurance pro-
4 gram based on an uninsured child’s enrollment in
5 WIC or another public program.

6 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to give
7 States the flexibility to find children income eligible for
8 the medicaid program or State children’s health insurance
9 program based on the fact that the children are eligible
10 for nutrition assistance or similar public programs with
11 comparable income standards and methodologies.

12 **SEC. 3. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE FOR SIMPLIFIED DE-**
13 **TERMINATIONS OF A CHILD’S FINANCIAL ELI-**
14 **GIBILITY FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE UNDER**
15 **MEDICAID OR CHILD HEALTH ASSISTANCE**
16 **UNDER SCHIP.**

17 (a) MEDICAID.— Section 1902(e) of the Social Secu-
18 rity Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(e)) is amended by adding at
19 the end the following:

20 “(13)(A) At the option of the State, the plan may
21 provide that financial eligibility requirements for medical
22 assistance are met for an individual who is under an age
23 specified by the State (except as provided in subparagraph
24 (C), not to exceed 21 years of age) by using a determina-
25 tion made within a reasonable period (as determined by

1 the State) before its use for this purpose, of the individ-
2 ual's family or household income, or if applicable for pur-
3 poses of determining eligibility under this title or title
4 XXI, assets or resources, by a Federal or State agency,
5 or a public or private entity making such determination
6 on behalf of such agency, specified by the plan, including
7 (but not limited to) an agency administering the Food
8 Stamp Act of 1977, the Richard B. Russell National
9 School Lunch Act, or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966,
10 notwithstanding any differences in budget unit, disregard,
11 deeming, or other methodology, but only if—

12 “(i) the agency has fiscal liabilities or respon-
13 sibilities affected or potentially affected by such de-
14 termination; and

15 “(ii) any information furnished by the agency
16 pursuant to this subparagraph is used solely for pur-
17 poses of determining eligibility for medical assistance
18 under this title or for child health assistance under
19 title XXI.

20 “(B) Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be con-
21 strued—

22 “(i) to authorize the denial of medical assist-
23 ance under this title or of child health assistance
24 under title XXI to an individual who, without the

1 application of this paragraph, would qualify for such
2 assistance;

3 “(ii) to relieve a State of the obligation under
4 subsection (a)(8) to furnish medical assistance with
5 reasonable promptness after the submission of an
6 initial application that is evaluated or for which eval-
7 uation is requested pursuant to this paragraph; or

8 “(iii) to relieve a State of the obligation to de-
9 termine eligibility for medical assistance under this
10 title or for child health assistance under title XXI on
11 a basis other than family or household income (or,
12 if applicable, assets or resources) if an individual is
13 determined ineligible for such assistance on the basis
14 of information furnished pursuant to this paragraph.

15 “(C) At the option of a State, the financial eligibility
16 process described in subparagraph (A) may apply to an
17 individual who is older than age 21 if the individual’s eligi-
18 bility for medical assistance under this title is based on
19 pregnancy or if the individual is a parent, guardian, or
20 other caretaker relative of an individual found eligible
21 under subparagraph (A).”.

22 (b) SCHIP.— Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Secu-
23 rity Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended by adding
24 at the end the following:

1 “(E) Section 1902(e)(13) (relating to the
2 State option to base an individual’s eligibility
3 for assistance on financial determinations made
4 by a program providing nutrition or other pub-
5 lic assistance (except that the State option
6 under subparagraph (C) of such section shall
7 apply under this title only if an individual is
8 pregnant)).”.

9 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
10 this section take effect on October 1, 2005.

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